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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : OER - Mr. Hillenbrand

DATE: August 6, 1959

FROM : GDI - Jonathan Dean

SUBJECT: The Next Phase of Negotiations with the USSR on the German Question

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1. The Present Situation - No Decision on the Berlin Question

At present writing, it appears that no acceptable, firm agreement on the Berlin situation will be reached in the foreseeable future through negotiations with the USSR. The Soviets have scored measurable if limited gains from us in gaining increased though grudging acceptance of the Soviet Zone regime as a fact of international life and, while they have not as yet been able to gain the formal American acceptance of the status quo in Europe through our agreement either to their "open city" concept or to reduction of our Berlin forces which they clearly wanted to achieve by using their leverage on Berlin, they have in a way achieved this aim by the different means of the Nixon-Khrushchev-Eisenhower visit complex, which cannot fail to have very far-reaching symbolic significance throughout the world.

Perhaps there is some reason for limited gratitude that this other possibility has opened up for the Soviet leaders since, while the visit atmosphere lasts, they are unlikely to press their point in Berlin. We for our part are relieved of the necessity of formally agreeing to our own proposals on Berlin, which would have been justified only in the highly unlikely event that we could have gotten an explicit, binding and lasting Soviet guarantee on Western access to the city.

2. Further Treatment of the Berlin Question

It now seems generally agreed that the West has gone as far as it should in making concessions to the Soviet position on Berlin, particularly with regard to reduction of the Berlin garrison, control of "espionage", and East German control over access to the city even though as agents of the USSR. Yet it will be expected by most people that the subject of Berlin will be handled in the forthcoming conversations between President Eisenhower and Khrushchev both here and in the USSR, whatever the informal, non-negotiating character of these conversations, as well as at a possible future Summit conference. Given the circumstances, perhaps the ideal treatment of the Berlin subject would be to attempt to concentrate discussion on the wider German unity question. This in turn would not be feasible unless we had something new to say to this point.

3. Two Proposals

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3. The Proposals

It is therefore suggested that a fresh look be taken at the possibility of modifying the Western Peace Plan to include a prohibition against the use as well as production of nuclear weapons by the armed forces of a united Germany and of its Eastern neighbors and at the possibility of extending Western security guarantees to the borders of a united Germany which had decided to join neither NATO nor the Warsaw Pact.

4. Aim of These Proposals

These proposals would have the following aims:

a. To remove the remnants of German suspicion that our principal interest in the Federal Republic is to exploit its military potential in the struggle with the USSR, and thus to gain more wholehearted German participation in NATO.

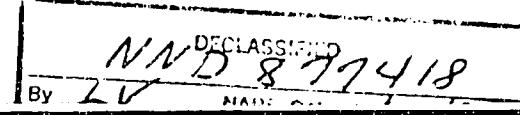
b. To maintain German morale over the long period ahead by opening a real if distant avenue of hope of ultimate Soviet agreement to German reunification. Without some new opening to the future, our own policy on reunification may appear increasingly unrealistic, while the Germans may relax their opposition to world acceptance to the East Zone regime as a permanent facet of the international scene and further drift towards piecemeal acceptance of the Soviet confederation line in a mood of pessimism.

c. While it is not considered that these additions to the Western reunification proposals are of sufficient weight to bring rapid Soviet acceptance of the Western position, it is believed that they would be of great potential importance to the Soviet leaders and that it would be highly valuable for us to have advanced them so that they would become a real factor in the minds of Soviet leaders when they are considering their foreign policy problems in the coming years. In terms of their long term effects on Soviet thinking, it is probably better to have publicly advanced proposals of this type and to release them to do their work in the inner councils of the Soviet leaders where they may catalyze previously disorganized forces or at least cause dissension, rather than to hold them back as ultimate concessions for some future bargaining.

d. The proposals described would create a far better starting position for what appears to me a highly desirable cooperative American-European effort to make more use of the German potential in Eastern Europe since they would serve to diminish Eastern European suspicion of the Federal Republic and of our own support for Germany.

e. The proposals

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e. The proposals would also have the effect of preparing the way for the establishment of a European nuclear weapons pool under NATO auspices if this were considered a desirable device for solving the problems caused by the French desire to develop an independent nuclear capacity and by European dissatisfaction at our dominance in this field. Both German and world opinion would accept German participation in an arms pool of this type with much more ease if an offer to "denuclearize" a united Germany were already on record with the USSR.

5. Difficulties of These Proposals

It is admittedly late in the game for introducing new elements into our handling of the German question even though it is believed we are faced by a specific requirement for a fresh treatment of the subject by the approach of the Eisenhower-Khrushchev talks. An approach of this type would take extensive coordination with allies and might lead to a revival of pressure for the Rapacki Plan for nuclear disarmament without political settlement of the German question. (Though to this, it can be pointed out that our proposals represent such grave risks for Western security that they would be justified only in the event of a genuine political settlement in Central Europe which would simultaneously reassure us as to real Soviet intentions in the area and remove its most dangerous source of unrest in the form of German reunification.)

There would of course be active resistance from the Pentagon to the line suggested above. Yet the Pentagon cannot have it both ways. If the proposal is made and rejected, no harm whatever is done our military position in Europe; it might even be improved as a result of improvement in the German atmosphere and through opening a way to a European nuclear weapons pool. If the proposal is made and accepted, then the military losses would have to be balanced directly against the political gains and not against an ideal standard of military security. Given the political advantages involved, there is nothing horrifying to the layman's eye about the prospect, which is very far off indeed, of a united Germany with strong conventional armament backed by numerically reduced American contingents armed with long range nuclear weapons and based in the Low Countries, England or France.

6. Recommendation

It is suggested that this line of thought be given further consideration for possible use in further discussions of the German problem with the Soviets.

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